

Ellis Island, Main Building
Statue of Liberty National Monument
New York Harbor
New York
New York County
New York

HABS No. NY-6086-C

HABS
NY
31-ELLIS,
1C-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HABS
NY
31-ELLIS
1C-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ELLIS ISLAND, MAIN BUILDING

HABS No. NY-6086-C

- Location: Statue of Liberty National Monument, New York Harbor, New York, New York County, New York
- Significance: Having served as the entrance to the United States at the nation's largest port for over seventy per cent of immigrants entering this country from 1892 to 1954, Ellis Island is the most important immigration depot still standing. Over 16 million people passed through the main building on their way to their new homeland.
- Description: Completed in 1900, the main immigration building stands on Island No. 1. Changes in later years include the addition of a third story to both wings. The building is made of brick with stone trim.
- History: Ellis Island was the main entry point for immigrants to the United States from 1892-1954. All immigrants at this station passed through the second floor examination hall of the main building after its completion in 1900. Passage of the Immigration Law of 1924 sharply reduced the flow of immigrants to America and thus reduced the need for such facilities as Ellis Island. In its later years, it was primarily used for assembly and deportation of illegal aliens, and was finally closed in 1954. In 1965, Ellis Island became part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument by Presidential Proclamation and was thus put under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. Extensive restoration of buildings on the island was undertaken in the mid-1980s in conjunction with the national celebration of the 100th birthday of the Statue of Liberty in 1986.
- Source: Torres-Reyes, Ricardo. Ellis Island. National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 1975.
- Historian: Holly K. Chamberlain, historian, HABS, July 7, 1988